

CONTEMPORARY HUNGARIAN SETTLEMENT NAMES REFLECTING FORMER ECCLESIASTICAL POSSESSION*

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Contemporary Hungarian settlement names reflecting former ecclesiastical possession

Abstract: The Church, a significant power in medieval Europe, exerted a long-lasting influence on Hungarian place nomenclature. A considerable number of today's Hungarian settlement names referring to (i) the former possession of a clergyman; and (ii) the former possession of a religious order developed in the Middle Ages and are well attested in medieval historical sources. Based on a corpus of relevant toponyms, this paper presents the cultural and linguistic history of these place names. The study explores such topics as: factors contributing to the survival of the observed settlement names; the prevailing morphological, syntactic and semantic structures recognizable in the name forms; sound and structural changes affecting the surveyed settlement names; and today's native speakers' (mis)conceptions of the Church as an early possessor of habitations in the country.

Keywords: Hungarian, settlement names, Christianity, Church, possession history.

Church organization and ecclesiastical possession in Medieval Hungary

In the second half of the ancient Hungarian era (i.e. between c. 450 and 896), the ancestors of the Hungarians, as they made their long journey from place to place towards their new homeland in the Carpathian Basin, witnessed the appearance and disappearance of several (mostly proto-Iranian and Turkic) tribes in the steppe zone of Southeastern Europe. The feeling of insecurity regarding the future of the Hungarian people boosted the trust of the commoners in their leaders of supposedly divine origin (see the old Hungarian legend about Emese's Dream¹). Arriving in the territory of modern-day Hungary, the Hungarian tribes eventually settled down and tended to live a less unpredictable way of

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¹ The legend concerns the conception of Álmos ('the dreamt one'; c. 820-c. 895), the first Grand Prince of the Hungarians and the forefather of the Árpád dynasty. As Anonymus, the medieval chronicler, claimed: "his pregnant mother [Emese < proto-Hungarian *eme* 'mother' + a suffix -s] had seen a divine vision in her dream of a Turul bird, as if flying over her and getting her with child; and a spring seemed to rise from her womb and many great kings originated from her loins, although they would multiply not in their own lands" (quoted in Kristó and Makk 1996: 10; translation from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_Prince_%C3%81mos).

life. In these circumstances, the realization that the ideas of Christianity (i.e. unconditional obedience to power; loyalty towards the king, who has been chosen by God to lead his people; respect for private property) could support the consolidation of the fading political power of the ruling dynasty, made Grand Prince Géza (971–997) and his son, Stephen I (997–1038), decide to adopt the faith of feudal Western Europe as an established religion in their newly founded state (Kristó 2003a: 152; Mályusz 2007: 16).

As the private possession of land had not yet been fully established in the country, Stephen I had to model the organization of his Church on the Italian ecclesiastical system, where churches did not count as properties of the feudal landowners on whose land they were erected, as they did in most other parts of Western Europe, but belonged to the royally appointed bishops of dioceses. Financial support for the system came from tithes allotted to the bishops on the profits from agricultural products as well as from the ever increasing income of the growing feudal estates donated to the Church by royalty and affluent noblemen. At the same time, Stephen I, following contemporary German practice, also founded his private cathedral chapter in Székesfehérvár (the sacred seat of his kingdom) and four to six private monasteries in Western Hungary (Kristó 2003a: 109–110, 193; Mályusz 2007: 17–21).

Stephen – to supersede the nomadic or tribal state, in which the members of society were bound by blood ties – established at least eight, possibly ten dioceses as well as around 29 counties in his country to provide the basis of the ecclesiastical and public administration organized on a regional basis. At this time the counties, employing the same staff of clerks, were functionally connected to the territories governed by the bailiffs, the managers of the king's diffused private plots. The seats of the bailiffs, apart from being economic, administrative and military centres, were also equipped with baptistery churches, whose priests (later archdeacons), being close colleagues of the bishops of the dioceses, were equal in rank with the bailiffs. Subsequently, by the beginning of the twelfth century, archdeaconries had evolved into bodies constituting the intermediate level of church administration. Furthermore, to form the lowest level of church organization, Stephen ordered ten villages to build a joint church, whose first priest was elected by the responsible bishop. Thus, a strong central organization of the clergy was effectuated in the dioceses. In absence of Hungarian clergymen, parishes first were led by priests of foreign (e.g. Italian, German, Slavic) origin. The members of the lower clergy under the surveillance of their respective bishops were supported financially with a quarter of the collected tithe (Kubinyi 1999: 213–223; Kristó 2003a: 101–110, 152; 2003b: 63–76; Engel et al. 2003: 299–306; Mályusz 2007: 17–21).

By the time of Ladislaus I (1077–1095) and Coloman (1095–1116), the existence of secular private properties had been solidified in the country; thus, the society became triform: big landowners, landed gentry and serfs. To display their gratitude and devotion (as well as their fortune and power), landlords regularly established private monasteries of significant wealth, usually serving also as burial places for them and their family members, over which they demanded full control. Rich lords granted tracts of their private land to monasteries, including former joint churches of ten villages found on the donated acres. Priests of these churches thereafter were appointed by the monastery, and thus ultimately could be considered as employees of the patron landlord. Landed gentry usually founded

more modest private churches or dispossessed village churches on their lands to be able to exert pressure on the outcome of local affairs by way of ecclesiastical influence. By the twelfth century, the network of episcopal churches had become densely dotted with private churches all over the country (Kristó 2003a: 194; Mályusz 2007: 21–32).

In the meantime, Ladislaus established cathedral chapters and collegiate bodies to help the work of the bishops, endowed and founded royal abbeys, initiated the canonization of Gellért, Stephen I and Emeric to give Hungarian saints to his people to venerate, whilst most of Coloman's laws tended to enhance clerical discipline in the church. Béla III (1172–1196) made considerable donations to the Knights Templar (who had their seat in Csurgó) and the Hospitallers (who had their seats in Buda and Székesfehérvár); and induced the canonization of Ladislaus I, whom he respected as his predecessor in church organization. In the twelfth century, monastic orders appeared in the country: monasteries of the Benedictine, Cistercian and Premonstratensian orders were established in succession either by the ruling kings or by important noble families. A hospital was run by the Order of Saint Lazarus in Esztergom, and the Order of Saint Stephen was set up by Géza II (1141–1162). The Golden Bull (1222) issued by Andrew II (1205–1235) ensured tax exemption to the Church, though it forbade the monetary redemption of the tithe and put the salt trade into the king's hands. The 1222 bull equipped the senior clergy with the privileges of a feudal order. By the thirteenth century, newly established mendicant orders such as the Dominicans, the Franciscans, and (semi-)hermit orders such as the Carthusians and the Paulines, had become much more popular in the country than the monastic ones (Kristó 2003a: 132–138, 178–179, 194, 213–214, 258–260).

By the end of the fourteenth century, as the old counties were divided and new counties established as a result of the increase in population as well as the conquest of new, heretofore uninhabited territories in the country, so were the dioceses multiplied and divided into several archdeaconries, resulting in about 99 archdeaconries in fourteen dioceses in the 69 counties and some ethnic regions of the Kingdom of Hungary. The territory of an archdeaconry and that of a county thus roughly coincided. Whilst the boundaries of the secular administrative units were typically formed spontaneously, often disregarding the natural geographical boundaries, the boundaries of the dioceses were established by the king, usually – as a remnant of nomadic space perception – in relation to rivers (Kristó 2003a: 194; 2003b: 78–102).

Over the centuries, the enrichment of the Church ran parallel with the strengthening of feudalism: first the estates of the ecclesiarchs came into existence (sons of landowning aristocrats often took positions as prelates; bishops were entitled to keep for themselves a quarter of the ecclesiastical goods obtained under their government), soon followed by the appearance of the estates of the parish priests. In the thirteenth century, the mighty archdiocese of Esztergom, because of the amount of its accumulated landed property, could make an attempt at being transformed into an autonomous province, which finally proved to be unsuccessful. Estates possessed by monasteries, abbeys and parishes were typically diffused properties. Lands belonging to a monastery founded by the king were usually vast when compared to those owned by an abbey established by a landlord. The Church as a feudal landowner also set an example to the secular layer on how to make farming on their estates profitable. The economic system of the omnipresent Church was undoubtedly more

developed, and thus more attractive, than any other previous attempts to provide welfare. Eventually, due to its position as a landowner, the Church became inseparable from feudalism: by the turn of the fourteenth–fifteenth centuries, 12.1% of landed property in the country had belonged to the Church, whose income from its lands by that time must have exceeded the amount of the tithe. In 1458, at the beginning of King Matthias's (1458–1490) reign, 10.3% of the castles and 17.4% of the towns, including the wealthiest market-towns in the country, were in ecclesiastical hands (Kubinyi 1999: 69–86; Kristó 2003a: 150–151, 258–260; Engel et al. 2003: 82, 225; Mályusz 2007: 19–20, 31).

The corpus of the analysed toponyms

Medieval Christianity had an important effect on the geographical surroundings (by erecting churches, monasteries, chapels, crosses and other buildings of ecclesiastical use; cf. Davies 2002²: 417), on proprietorship (by establishing ecclesiastical private properties to maintain the church system and its representatives; cf. Kubinyi 1999: 337; Mályusz 2007: 20) and, by way of these factors, at least in the case of certain recently founded habitations, on several evolving settlement names, manifesting linguistically the contemporary reality from the Church's perspective.

In conformity with this phenomenon, traditional Hungarian onomastic literature (undoubtedly for cultural reasons) classifies toponyms of very different linguistic features as *ecclesiastical place names*. Summarizing several relevant expert views (Kniezsa 1943; Bach 1953; Mikešy 1967; Solymosi 1976; Benkő 1987, 1993), András Mező (1996a: 23–24; see also 1997: 245) identifies four types of Hungarian ecclesiastical settlement names: (i) names referring to an ecclesiastical building or its parts; (ii) names referring to the patron saint to whom the church was dedicated; (iii) names referring to a churchman; and (iv) names referring to an ecclesiastical body.

Comparing the central role of the Church in conveying the all-pervasive Christian world concept in the Middle Ages with the actual references of the ecclesiastical settlement names established in the era, one might observe – and it does not contradict Mező's above-mentioned classification – two essentially relevant name types: (i) settlement names providing information in connection with the ecclesiastical building of the habitation (i.e. name forms referring to ecclesiastical buildings, their parts as well as the patron saint to whom the church was dedicated); and (ii) settlement names stressing the role of the medieval Church as a feudal landowner (i.e. name forms referring to churchmen and ecclesiastical bodies). The two categories cannot always be clearly separated: in twelfth- and thirteenth-century charters – as it was confirmed by György Györffy (1960: 33) – one can often read that a piece of land was donated to a patron saint, who became the eponym as the symbolic owner of the place in question.

I intend below to examine contemporary Hungarian settlement names reflecting former ecclesiastical possession, i.e. names belonging to the second category pointed out in the previous paragraph. I collected the analysed name forms from the *Gazetteer of Hungary, 1st January 2012*. My examination here is restricted to (i) official names indicating settlements found in the territory of present-day Hungary (though in some comparisons I will occasionally quote Hungarian minority names identifying settlements outside the present

borders of Hungary); (ii) names indicating settlements whose former possession by the Church is verified in the entries of the etymological dictionary by Lajos Kiss (hereafter: FNESz.⁴); and (iii) names in which (at least) one of the constituents² identifies the ecclesiastical possessor linguistically.

The prevailing linguistic features of the relevant name forms

Below the (i) semantic references of the observed name forms, (ii) the appearance of the name type in time and space, (iii) the structural features as well as (iv) the possible changes of the name forms are discussed.

The former ecclesiastical possessors referred to in the observed name forms

Out of the 3,176 settlement names included in the *Gazetteer*, 66 (2.1%) name forms refer expressly to the former ecclesiastical possession of the indicated settlement. Lajos Kiss identifies the actual owners in 50 (76%) of these cases: Adorjánpuszta Abbey, Almád Monastery, Báta Abbey, Bélháromkút Abbey, the Diocese of Győr, Ják Abbey, the Diocese of Nagyvárad, the Master of the Holy Rood Altar of Nagyvárad Cathedral, Pannonhalma Abbey, Pécsvárad Abbey, Pornó Abbey, Sárvármonostor Monastery, Szentgotthárd Abbey, the Knights Templar, Tihany Abbey, Torda Abbey and Zalavár Abbey each possessed a settlement; the Diocese of Csanád, the Archdiocese of Esztergom, the Chapter of Győr, the Knights Hospitaller, the Archdiocese of Kalocsa, Kapornak Abbey, Abasár Abbey, Somlóvásárhely Nunnery, the Diocese of Vác, the Chapter of Veszprém and the Diocese of Veszprém each owned two, the Diocese of Eger had four; and the Diocese of Pécs owned seven of the relevant settlements. Thus, according to the data provided in FNESz.⁴, references to ecclesiastical possession were customarily included in names indicating settlements possessed by the Benedictine, Cistercian and Premonstratensian orders and by certain orders of knighthood.

The appearance of the name type in time and space

Most of the observed name forms appeared first in written records between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries. A slight upsurge in the number of the relevant name forms can also be noticed in the twentieth century, as a result of the practice to pay considerable attention to historical authenticity when officially differentiating identical settlement names by means of attaching ecclesiastical distinctive additions to them (Mező 1982: 227–228). Details of the first appearance are attested in FNESz.⁴ according to centuries and number of relevant name forms (categorizing data from charters of indefinite date and from rewritten or interpolated documents at the earliest possible year): twelfth century – 1; thirteenth century – 16; fourteenth century – 16; fifteenth century – 8; sixteenth century – 4;

² The term *name constituent* is used here as in Hoffmann (2007²): a name constituent is a unit of the toponym “which—in the situation of name formation—express any semantic feature that is connected with the signalled denotatum”, as opposed to a *name element*, which is “an umbrella term for all the lexemes and suffixive morphemes (derivational and inflectional suffixes) that take part in forming the name” (176, 177).

seventeenth century – 1; eighteenth century – 3; nineteenth century – 5; twentieth century – 11. The latest adequate name form appeared in 2000.

The spatial distribution of the name type according to regions is as follows: in Northern Hungary 10, in the Northern Great Hungarian Plain 9, in the Southern Great Hungarian Plain 5, in Central Hungary 5, in Central Transdanubia 10, in Western Transdanubia 14, and in Southern Transdanubia 13 settlements indicated by relevant name forms are to be found. Thus, the surveyed name type appears most frequently in the Transdanubian region (especially in Baranya and Veszprém Counties) and in the northern area of the country, whilst in the Southern Great Hungarian Plain and in Central Hungary, partly as a result of the extensive village destruction that took place in this territory under the Turkish occupation of Hungary (1541–1699), only a couple of settlements bearing a relevant name can be observed. It is interesting to note, however, that in the past the other type of ecclesiastical names, i.e. those referring to the presence, characteristics and dedication of a relevant building situated in the indicated settlement, also proved to be most widespread in Transdanubia, but lacked popularity in Northern Hungary (Mező 1996: 228–230; Bölcskei 2008: 108). At the same time, Hungarian minority settlement names reflecting former ecclesiastical possession can also be found in most neighbouring countries: from Croatia, Serbia and Ukraine 1, from Austria 5, from Slovakia 23 and from Romania 26 relevant name forms are included in FNESz.⁴

Important structural features of the name type

The stock and frequency of the church related lexemes in the analysed name forms display the following pattern: *apát* ('abbot') occurs in 22 examples, *püspök* ('bishop') in 18, *pap* ('priest') in 6, *barát* ('friar') in 4, *káptalan* ('chapter') in 4, *keresztes* (here 'Hospitallers') in 4, *apáca* ('nun') in 3, *érsek* ('archbishop') in 3, and *remete* ('hermit') in 2 examples. These lexemes form parts of single-constituent name forms in 3 (4.5%) cases, stand as (one element of) the basic constituent of two-constituent name forms in 34 (51.5%) examples, and function as (one element of) the complement constituent in 29 (43.9%) two-constituent name forms (in 6 of the latter cases the basic constituent is a generic element, whilst in 23 name forms the basic constituent is a toponym in its own right).

If one of the above lexemes stands as a complement constituent in a settlement name, a name-forming suffix – though indirectly – could only be attached to the lexeme *pap*, as shown by a single modern example (*Papitanya*, but also in the form *Popi* in 1243; FNESz.⁴ 2: 316). If the lexemes form (parts of) the basic constituent of a name form, or function as elements of single-constituent names, the toponym-forming suffix *-i* (derived from the possessive suffix *é*) is frequent next to the lexemes *apát*, *pap* and *püspök*, and might appear at the end of the lexeme *barát* (e.g. *Nemesapáti*, *Hejőpapi*, *Sajópüspöki*, *Bernecebaráti*; FNESz.⁴ 2: 227, 1: 583, 2: 438, 1: 204); some of the latter lexemes, however, are also found non-suffixed in names (e.g. *Nyársapát*, *Pap*; FNESz.⁴ 2: 252, 315). One can quote a few settlement names in which the lexemes treated here are elements of the compound basic constituent, which is differentiated by a distinctive addition (e.g. *Bélapátfalva*, *Nádasapfalva*, *Győrújbarát*; FNESz.⁴ 1: 187, 2: 170, 1: 550), or of the single-constituent name form (e.g. *Barátúr*; FNESz.⁴ 1: 167). Other lexemes

appearing in the above-mentioned statistics are usually included in the relevant name forms without any suffixes.

The few single-constituent name forms include the lexemes *barát*, *pap* and *püspök*, with (*Püski* < *Püspöki*; FNESz.⁴ 2: 385) or without a suffix (*Pap*; FNESz.⁴ 2: 315), or as an element of the compound constituent (*Barátúr*; FNESz.⁴ 1: 167). Among Hungarian minority settlement names abroad one can also observe two unique name forms. Firstly, *Apatin* (Serbia; FNESz.⁴ 1: 105) is a result of misinterpreting word structure in borrowings: the primary Hungarian name *Apáti* (see above) came into use in the Serbo-Croatian language in its native locative form ending in the suffix *-n*, which was conceived as the inalienable element of the settlement name by the borrowers, who later gave the Hungarian speakers back the name with some slight modification with respect to the length of the second vowel, thus making the form entirely unrecognizable for the name givers. Secondly, today's Mosonbánfalva (Austria, FNESz.⁴ 2: 161) – as a consequence of the outcome of the possessory action over the settlement rejecting the claim of the Cistercian Abbey of Heiligenkreuz for proprietary rights – was also known as *Apátlan* ('without an abbot', i.e. not owned by an abbot) for a while in the past. The Hungarian form with the privative suffix served as a basis for *Apetlon*, today's German name for the settlement.

The smaller group of the observed two-constituent settlement names comprises name forms which consist of a complement constituent in an attributive function referring to the former ecclesiastical possessor and a geographical common noun (usually indicating the type of settlement) functioning as the basic constituent. Half of the name forms are morphologically marked (e.g. *Apátfalva* 'the village of the abbot', *Érsekhalma* 'the hill of the archbishop'; FNESz.⁴ 1: 105, 429), and half of them are morphologically unmarked (e.g. *Keresztespuszta* 'farmstead of the Templars'; FNESz.⁴ 1: 719) possessive structures. In the complement constituents of the relevant name forms we can identify six (i.e. *apát*, *érsek*, *káptalan*, *keresztes*, *pap*, *püspök*) of the eleven church related lexemes appearing in the above statistics.

In the larger group of the observed two-constituent settlement names we can find name forms consisting of a complement constituent in an attributive function and a toponymic basic constituent. Names of joint settlements, whose constituents were originally used as independent toponyms, are also included in this group, because the toponym in the function of the complement constituent of the modern form has been reinterpreted into an attributive constituent indicating a characteristic feature of the place. Settlement names in which the former ecclesiastical possession is referred to in the basic constituent and those in which the same semantic content is expressed in the complement constituent are described below separately.

The basic constituents indicating the former ecclesiastical possession in the observed two-constituent settlement names include the lexemes *apáca*, *apát*, *barát*, *keresztes*, *pap*, *püspök*, *remete* from the above statistics. The complement constituent, always a qualifier in these name forms, might refer to a river next to the denoted habitation (seven instances, e.g. *Sajópüspöki*, cf. H. *Sajó*, a river name; FNESz.⁴ 2: 438); a significant neighbouring (occasionally joint) settlement (seven instances, e.g. *Márokpapi*, cf. H. *Márok*, a place name; FNESz.⁴ 2: 99); the county or district to which the settlement belongs or once belonged (five instances, e.g. *Biharkeresztes*, cf. H. *Bihar*, a county name; FNESz.⁴ 1: 213); the region

where the settlement is found (two instances, e.g. *Sárkeresztes*, cf. H. Sárrét, a name of a region; FNESz.⁴ 2: 452); the ecclesiastical owner in specific terms (two instances, e.g. *Bátaapáti*, possessed by the Benedictine Abbey of Bata; FNESz.⁴ 1: 175); well-known geographical features nearby (two instances, e.g. *Szurdokpüspöki*, from a nearby valley; FNESz.⁴ 2: 603); the former name of the settlement (two instances, e.g. *Pornóapáti*, cf. H. *Pornó*, a place name; FNESz.⁴ 2: 364); the inhabitants of the settlement (an instance, e.g. *Nemesapáti*, cf. H. *nemes* 'noble'; FNESz.⁴ 2: 227); the relative situation of the settlement (an instance, e.g. *Alsónemesapáti*, cf. H. *alsó* 'lower'; FNESz.⁴ 1: 86); the (former) flora of the place (an instance, e.g. *Nyársapát*, cf. H. *nyár(a)s* 'with poplars'; FNESz.⁴ 2: 252); the size of the settlement (an instance, e.g. *Kisapáti*, cf. H. *kis* 'little'; FNESz.⁴ 1: 736); the temporary deserted state of the place (an instance, e.g. *Pusztapáti*, cf. H. *puszta* 'desolate'; FNESz.⁴ 2: 379); more than one or an ambiguous feature of the habitation (two instances, e.g. *Mezőkeresztes*; FNESz.⁴ 2: 131, either in connection with the natural scenery or the former role of the settlement as a market town).

If the complement constituent (i.e. the distinctive addition) indicates the former ecclesiastical possession in the two-constituent settlement name, it might involve the lexemes *apáca*, *apát*, *érsek*, *káptalan*, *pap*, *püspök*, *remete*. These name forms are either morphologically unmarked possessive or adjectival structures. The basic constituents of these names, functioning primarily as independent settlement names, can refer to the following features of the indicated habitations: the inhabitants (six instances, e.g. *Káptalantóti*, cf. old H. *tót* 'Slovakian'; FNESz.⁴ 1: 685); the former lay owner (five instances, e.g. *Érsekcsanád*, cf. H. *Csanád*, a personal name; FNESz.⁴ 1: 429); the flora (four instances, e.g. *Püspökszilágy*, cf. H. *szil* 'elm'; FNESz.⁴ 2: 386); the patron saint (two instances, e.g. *Püspökszentlászló*, cf. H. *Szent László* 'Saint Ladislaus'; FNESz.⁴ 2: 386); the river nearby (an instance, e.g. *Apácatorna*, cf. H. *Torna*, a river name; FNESz.⁴ 1: 104); or some other features (five instances, e.g. *Káptalanfüred*: H. *füred* 'a place with quails' > 'bathing resort' reinterpretation in the name of a holiday resort on the shore of Lake Balaton; FNESz.⁴ 1: 685).

Sound and structural changes affecting the surveyed settlement names

Historical data of the surveyed settlement names provided in FNESz.⁴ clarify that 55 (83%) name forms have changed at least once throughout history. In most cases, name forms – sometimes as a result of alternations in settlement patterns – underwent multiple changes of different types (21 instances, e.g. 1232: *Borat* > 1395: *Kysbarathy* and 1368: *Nagbarath* > 1969: *Győrújbarát*; FNESz.⁴ 1: 550).³ Between 1945 and 1954, three of the relevant settlement names were intentionally deprived of their ecclesiastical distinctive additions by the corresponding responsible committee for ideological reasons (avoiding reference to the former importance of the Church), e.g. 1274/1340: *Lele* > 1900: *Püspöktele*

³ In the example, first, when the settlement called 1232: *Borat* was split up, distinctive additions expressing size were attached to the primary name form with or without an additional suffix to indicate the new villages (1395: *Kysbarathy* and 1368: *Nagbarath*). Then, when the two villages were later joined again, these distinctive additions were changed into new ones referring to age and the district to which the joint settlement belonged, both occurring within a single name form (1969: *Győrújbarát*).

(the former possession of the Diocese of Csanád) > 1950: *Maroslele* (next to the river Maros; FNESz.⁴ 2: 101; Mező 1982: 286–292).

In the case of single attested changes, most frequently a distinctive addition was attached to the basic constituent indicating former ecclesiastical possession (eighteen instances, e.g. 1261/1271: *Poph* > 1851: *Héjő-Papi*; FNESz.⁴ 1: 583), or a toponym was distinguished by a distinctive addition expressing the proprietary rights of the Church (eleven instances, e.g. 1351/1423: *Ladan* > 1543: *Pispek Ladany*; FNESz.⁴ 2: 385). One might also observe some examples that display the loss of the semantic content of a constituent, accompanied by the abbreviation of its form (three instances, e.g. 1542: *Kapthalanfalwa* > 1696: *Captalanfa*; FNESz.⁴ 1: 685),⁴ the simultaneous occurrence of changes of distinct types (an instance, e.g. 1245: *Burnuce* and 1353: *Baraath* were joined to form 1928: *Bernecebaráti*; FNESz.⁴ 1: 204),⁵ and the addition of a constituent (an instance, 1221: *Porno* > 1907: *Pornóapáti*; FNESz.⁴ 2: 364).

Conclusion

The latest Hungarian onomastic literature describing the characteristics of name types in the modern name theoretical framework often claims that name-giving processes are individual rather than collective acts (Hajdú 2003: 56–58; Hoffmann 2005: 120), and that at least certain settlement names were surely given in the past on an advocacy basis (Hoffmann 2005: 122–123; Tóth 2007). Linguistic expressions, including settlement names, are designed by the speakers to reflect a given perspective (Tolcsvai Nagy 2010: 10–11, 32–33, 34–36; Slíz 2012: 286); also “language provides ways of directing attention to certain aspects of the scene being linguistically encoded” (Evans and Green 2006: 41). In this light, it is perfectly understandable that in a feudal society – which connected authority to the ownership of landed property – the medieval Hungarian Church – whilst establishing the economic background to support its ambitions to act as a spiritual leader as well as a mighty political power in the country – wanted to emphasize its role as a proprietor also in settlement names. The relevant settlement names were conventionalized in the language, resulting in the overshadowing of the former possession history of the habitations and convincing contemporary people as well as native speakers of later eras – as was intended by the name givers – that these mostly endowed settlements were originally in ecclesiastical possession.

⁴ In the example, *-fa* can be considered as the phonetic variant of the constituent *-falva* (< *falu* ‘village’ + 3rd person singular possessive suffix) (cf. Tóth 2008: 206–219).

⁵ In the example, the primary names were not only merged, but an additional suffix *-i* was also attached to the name form at the same time.

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